

MINUTES
STATE PRESERVES ADVISORY BOARD
Wapsi River Environmental Education Center
July 14, 2006

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Scott Moats
Carl Kurtz
Laura Jackson, Chair
Cindy Peterson
Liz Christiansen

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Armando Rosales
Deb Lewis

STAFF PRESENT

John Pearson
Daryl Howell
Lisa Nissen

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Laura Jackson called the meeting to order at 8:40 AM on July 14, 2006 at the Wapsi River Environmental Education Center.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Add: Request from Tom Rosburg to study a prairie (7a)
Add: Discuss research policy (7b)

<i>Motion was made by Liz Christianson to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by Carl Kurtz. Motion carried.</i>

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

<i>Motion was made by Liz Christiansen to approve the minutes from the April 14th meeting. Seconded by Scott Moats. Motion carried.</i>

STEELE PRAIRIE STATE PRESERVES

Kathy Koskovich, private lands biologist, met with Ginger Vietor, the Cherokee County Conservation Board Director, about management at Steele Prairie. They are planning to submit an application for WHIP funds next spring. Ginger has met with Bill Watson and discussed the Reed's Canary Grass problem. Draft management prescriptions will be sent to the Board for review this fall or winter.

John Pearson read the most current email sent by Kathy Koskovich. Dave Rummel, state NRCS WHIP director informed us not to include any state owned land in this special project application. Instead we should submit an application under the WHIP public lands category when they put out the next announcement in the spring of 2007.

NRCS and WHIP are going forward with the special project application called the Little Sioux Watershed special project area. This would include four different counties. The deadline is August 1st.

<i>Information Only</i>

ANDERSON PRAIRIE STATE PRESERVES

Daryl Howell said that the neighbors decided not to sign the agreement prepared by Bryan Hellyer, DNR wildlife biologist/area manager, and approved by the Board in April regarding the tile outlets. They have referred the matter to their attorney. Neil Bernstein and Bryan Heiser, District Supervisor has spoken to the attorney about the need to obtain a sovereign land construction permit or to follow the drainage district law process. They hope to hear how the landowners intend to proceed in the next week or two.

We hope they go through the sovereign lands construction permit process, so that we can put certain stipulations and have better control of what will be done.

CONTINUING PROJECTS

The Wapello County Conservation Board provided partial funding (\$1,000) for the Garrison Rock plant and animal survey. This allowed full-funding for all projects selected by the preserves Board at the April meeting.

Daryl Howell said that Larry Stone offered to come to the next preserves meeting and present results of his study "Bixby: A History".

Cindy Peterson said that we should note in the RFP's for a smaller version of the results from an archeological study. This is basically the full report without the sensitive areas.

If the researcher wishes to share his report, then they could present to the board but otherwise we can just view this information on the web.

Laura Jackson said that it would be good if the land managers received the reports from the different studies to help with different aspects of the preserve.

Scott Moats said that they probably do read the reports but would implement differently based on their expertise in a certain area.

Bob Bryant from the Wapsi River Education Center said that the studies are good in that they include all the species lists, but there are no management ideas from the results found. This would be good to include.

Laura Jackson said that in the management plan at the top, in bold print, we could print **Management Practices to Consider** and then list out the different issues of concerns and how to accomplish them.

Carl Kurtz said that it should also prioritize the list of concerns. Most people don't realize the vegetation of the land until it's too late.

John Pearson said that most reports include recommendations but DNR staff could fill some of that need to note top priorities.

Laura Jackson said that it's not necessary to mandate but in some cases where needed we could give preference to have the grantee meet one on one with the landowner/manager to make sure that the outcomes match what is proposed. It would be a way for us to convey that the report has outcomes.

OPEN DISCUSSION

Scott Moats said he concerned with researchers on preserves collecting data, leaving their equipment, and digging holes without anyone else's knowledge. I came across a situation of a man digging holes and collecting beetles for research. There was no prior approval. Some researchers are not aware of preserve rules. Do we need to send out an annual letter to researchers across the state on the policies of research on preserves?

John Pearson said that it maybe hard to track the unknown researchers. We do inform researchers that they need to inform and get permission from the land managers before research begins. I don't believe there is really anything we can do more that would totally prevent this.

GOAL SETTING

Laura Jackson suggested some goals for the board to accomplish during the upcoming year. Please offer input.

- 1) Develop public/neighborhood relationship with those living near the preserve. Possibly setting up volunteers to look after the preserve and then contact us if there is a problem.
- 2) Fundraising for Preserves management – looking beyond our constraints and finding other opportunities for funding. (grant proposals, WHIP monies, etc.) We need to build support among the public for the preserves.
- 3) Evaluating the outcome of our grants program. Look at the research that has been done over the years and use it to its fullest capacity. We need to ask ourselves if we are getting the best effect for our money.
- 4) Professional development for our preserve managers – providing more technical support and support for preserves in the communities.

Another approach we could take instead of setting goals would be to handle things as they come to the board. To be reactive instead of proactive.

Laura Jackson said that she would like to see the board adopt at least one of the goals and then take steps to accomplish it.

Scott Moats said that The Nature Conservancy does try to work on professional development for their employees. We could have a field day for the land and state managers as suggested in meetings past to discuss new management ideas and to look at the various techniques. (haying, grazing, fire management, etc.)

Liz Christiansen said that the Director is calling a committee together as directed by legislation to develop sustainable funding for conservation. That may have some opportunities for the board though it may be 2-3 years out.

Liz suggested that the board could use some of the money given to the preserves budget to help hold a field day or to hire an AmeriCorps person to do outreach with neighbors of the preserves.

Scott Moats said that maybe we could tie in with the Iowa Prairie Network or the Native Plant Society. They have good contacts and it would help with the joint efforts in having eyes and ears for the preserve. It would just need to be someone (maybe even a neighbor) that would look out for larger issues.

John Pearson said that we would encourage better relationships with the preserve managers.

Daryl Howell said that the field days are a good idea, you would almost need to hold them across the state to reach everyone. Maybe holding one field day a

year would be more feasible. We can't forget to take in all the logistics as far as traveling, reimbursement, meals, lodging, etc.

Motion was made by Scott Moats to focus on professional development for land managers and public relations for eyes and ears on a preserve. Seconded by Liz Christiansen.

Liz Christiansen said that Merry Rankin did come to the preserve a couple of years ago. I recall asking for various volunteer projects on preserves such as garlic mustard pulls, trash pick up, etc.

John Pearson said that we haven't followed up on the results for the volunteer groups for preserves as much as we hoped because the projects require a trained supervisor to oversee ecological management activities, which has been lacking to date.

Laura Jackson suggested that we list the job descriptions for a preserve plus the location on the DNR volunteer web page.

Motion carried.

Laura Jackson said that this will be added to September's agenda for further discussion and break down on what needs to be done to move ahead with the stated goals.

Liz Christiansen said that the Iowa Conservationist magazine has developed a new look and design. The first new issue of "Iowa Outdoors" will come out in January with an article from Scott Moats about the management of Loess Hills.

John Pearson said that Brian Button, editor of "Iowa Outdoors" asked what preserves we would like to highlight.

Bob Bryant, from Wapsi River Education Center said that Mark Miller thought the field tour was one of the best things that has happened for our preserve. Management issues will definitely change around the preserve in regards to invasive species (honeysuckle).

The Board discussed the policy on trails within a preserve, specifically the trail within Cameron Woods.

Cindy Peterson suggested that maybe the county/state could develop a management plan and then the board could decide what should be done for trails.

John Pearson said that we could include four different components in the management plan: honeysuckle, trails, bigger management issues and the need for a botanical inventory.

Motion was made by Scott Moats to recommend that a management plan be developed for Cameron Woods. Seconded by Carl Kurtz. Motion carried unanimously.

John Pearson said that one of Tom Rosburg's students is looking at energy allocation to reproduction among five species of Asclepius. He will measure the amount of biomass allocated to shoots, leaves, and reproduction (flowers and seed pods). He also is monitoring plants to see how many flowers successfully become pollinated and form fruits. There would be none to little impact to the preserve. I would recommend the board approving this study.

Motion was made by Scott Moats to approve Tom Rosburg's request. Seconded by Liz Christiansen. Motion carried unanimously.

NEXT MEETING

Friday, September 8th – Greene County The Board will tour Perkins Prairie in the morning and have the meeting in the afternoon at the Wildlife Research Station in Ledges State Park.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Liz Christiansen to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Cindy Peterson. Motion carried.

With no further business to come before the State Preserves Advisory Board, Chairperson Laura Jackson adjourned the meeting at 12:00 PM on July 14, 2006.

A

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